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Daily Report

Sub-Saharan Africa

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Central African Republic

Kolingba Makes 'Major' Cabinet Reshuffle 5 June

AB0506183990 Paris AFP in French 1708 GMT
5 Jun 90

[Text] Bangui, 5 Jun (AFP)—General Andre Kolingba, the Central African head of state, today made a major cabinet reshuffle, characterized by the arrival of 11 new politicians while nine ministers leave office, it was officially announced in Bangui. The new cabinet includes 25 ministers and state secretaries, while the previous one, formed on 15 June 1989, had 24.

Formation of the new cabinet is based on the resolutions made at the last extraordinary session of the single party (the Central African Democratic Rally) which recommended in particular designating a coordinating minister in the cabinet.

Edouard Frank, former minister in charge of the cabinet secretariat and relations with Parliament, has been appointed state minister in charge of coordination, while Dieudonne Wazoua becomes state minister for economy, finance, planning, and international cooperation.

Further on Reshuffling

AB0506184290 Paris AFP in English 1835 GMT
5 Jun 90

[Text] Bangui, June 5 (AFP)—General Andre Kolingba, president of the Central African Republic, carried out a government reshuffle Tuesday and named a senior official of the sole RDC [Central African Democratic Rally] party to replace Foreign Minister Michel Gbezera.

The new foreign minister is Laurent Gomina-Pampali, chief of staff of the executive secretary of the Rassemblement Democratique Centrafricain [RDC].

Gen. Kolingba appointed 11 newcomers, dismissed nine and added one new portfolio, expanding the cabinet to 25. Official sources said the shuffle was carried out as part of the president's new policy of openness. The new government is as follows:

Minister in charge of the Cabinet Secretariat: Edouard Frank
Minister of Economy, Finance, Planning and International Cooperation: Dieudonne Wazoua
Minister of Defense: Christophe Grelombe
Minister of Social Security and Territorial Administration: Thomas Mapouka
Minister of Foreign Affairs: Laurent Gomina-Pampali
Minister of Justice and Bearer of the Seals: Hugues Dobozeni
Minister of Primary, Secondary, and Technical Education: Joseph Mabingui
Minister of Higher Education: Jean-Marie Bassia
Minister of Transport and Civil Aviation: Pierre Gonifei-Gaibonanou

Minister of Civil Service, Labor, Social Security and Professional Training: Gaston Azibolo

Minister of Public Health and Social Affairs: Genevieve Lombilo

Minister of Rural Development: Casimir Amakpio

Minister of Posts and Telecommunications: Jean Tchombego

Minister of Public Works and Territorial Development: Dieudonne Nana

Minister of Energy, Mines, Geology and Water Resources: Dieudonne Padoundji Yadjoua

Minister of Water, Forests, Fish, Wildlife and Tourism: Raymond Mbitikon

Minister of Trade, Industry, and Small and Medium Enterprises: Thimotee Marboua

Minister of Communication, Arts and Culture: Tony Da Sylva

Secretary of State for the Economy and Finance, in charge of Budget and Debt Management: Patrice Endjingboma

Secretary of State For Planning, Statistics and International Cooperation: Thierry Bingaba

Secretary of State for Social Security and Territorial Administration: Augustin Mbanda

Secretary of State for Energy, Mines, Geology and Water Resources: Octave Cossi Houdegbe

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs: Jules Kouale Yaboro

Secretary of State for the Cabinet Secretariat: Christian Yamale

Secretary of State for Social Affairs: Antoinette Teguedere

Gabon

Prime Minister on State of Emergency, Oil Output

AB0506153390 Libreville Africa No. 1 in French
0730 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] The situation is returning to normal in Gabon, and Port-Gentil, the city most affected by the recent demonstrations following the death of opposition leader Joseph Rendjambe, is gradually recovering as economic activities resume. But the question everyone is now asking is: How long will the state of emergency last? Gabonese Prime Minister Casimir Oye Mba has this to say about it:

[Begin Mba recording] The state of emergency will be lifted when the government, after examining the information it got from the security forces there, is convinced that such disturbances will not occur again and that the situation has become normal indeed. What is now certain is that the situation requires that we still be cautious. What I mean is that when we compare the present situation to that prevailing when the state of emergency was decreed in the Ogooue-Maritime Province and we were forced to send these forces there, we see much

improvement, and it would be hasty to call back these forces right now and lift the state of emergency in that province. [end recording]

Economically speaking, oil production has also resumed in Port-Gentil, but how much will its recent interruption affect the country's economy? Mr. Oye Mba has this to say:

[Begin Mba recording] What we have lost as a result of the reduction or interruption in our oil production will not reach 1.5 or 1.6 percent of our annual output. Roughly, it stands for a bit less than we produce per week in a normal period. Therefore, when we compare this percentage to our annual output, first of all, it is quite minor, and second, this loss can be compensated for by the oil corporations. They have actually assured us that they are capable of achieving this objective. [end recording]

The Gabonese prime minister will discuss this issue at length tomorrow during a news conference devoted to the economic problems. This conference takes place a few days before his European tour aimed at reassuring Gabon's economic partners. He will visit France, Belgium, and Luxembourg.

* Bongo Favors Diplomatic Relations With RSA

90AF0112B Libreville L'UNION in French
12 Feb 90 p 1

[Text] President El Hadj Omar Bongo called on African countries on 11 February "to reestablish diplomatic relations" with Pretoria, following the announcement of the release of Nelson Mandela and the legalization of the African National Congress (ANC).

In a statement to "Africa No. 1," the Pan African radio network, the president said: "We should review our relations with South Africa. We should reestablish diplomatic relations, even if we do not have resident ambassadors in South Africa. Now we can leave it up to every country to develop the policy that it wishes to have with South Africa."

President Bongo also suggested that the Organization of African Unity (OAU) should designate 11 February as a "victory day" for Africa. He expressed his "satisfaction" over the release of the ANC leader, stating that "patience always pays." He also recalled the views of President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of the Ivory Coast, who has said that "only a dialogue will win out in the end." The president concluded: "Now a dialogue has won out over guns and rifles."

Zaire

Chad's Foreign Minister Arrives in Kinshasa

EA0406215090 Kinshasa Domestic Service in French
0500 GMT 4 Jun 90

[Text] Mr. Acheik ibn Oumar, Chadian minister of external relations and Chadian President Hissene Habre's emissary, who arrived in Kinshasa yesterday, is carrying a message for Marshal Mobutu Sese Seko. He refused to comment on the message, saying only that besides the Chad-Libya conflict and the current problems faced by the continent and by the planet, [words indistinct] better to establish contacts with one's partners to exchange views, in order to have a clear idea about how to tackle the situation better.

The Chadian minister of external relations carried out a similar mission in Gabon last week.

Higher Education Strikes Spread to Other Regions

EA0506211490 Bukavu Domestic Service in French
0430 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] Yesterday evening, Professor Lunda Bululu, the first state commissioner, received a delegation of students. The meeting was held at the official residence of the first state commissioner, and assessed the strikes by lecturers at higher education institutions in the capital. The trend has also spread to other regions. This is notably the case at the Teacher Training College [ISP] in Bukavu where lecturers have been on strike for three days, starting last Saturday. They are protesting the discrepancies noted in the May salary increases.

Some of the college lecturers have had salary increases of 30 percent, while others have had their salaries reduced by 30 percent. The ISP Bukavu lecturers have decided not to touch a single bank-note until the salaries are reviewed and their situation is settled by the state.

It should be noted that the university and scientific [word indistinct] personnel have decided to continue their strike until there is a satisfactory settlement of their demands [words indistinct] movement of grievances, in which lecturers are demanding salaries ranging from 200,000 zaires for junior lecturers to (?1,300,000) for ordinary lecturers.

As for the doctors, who have also decided to continue their strike, they want salaries ranging from 2,000,000 zaires for junior practitioners to 4,000,000 zaires for doctors who are heads of departments.

Ethiopia

Foreign Ministry Statement on Peace Talks

EA0506204590 Addis Ababa Domestic Service
in Amharic 1700 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] This evening, the Foreign Ministry issued a statement regarding the resumption of the peace talks aimed at peacefully resolving the problems in the northern part of our country, and on ways of enhancing relief assistance to drought victims in the area. Darios Modi will present the text of the ministry's statement:

[Darios] It should be recalled that soon after the talks between the Soviet and U.S. presidents on ways and means of resuming the talks between the Ethiopian Government and the self-styled Shabiyyah group [Eritrean People's Liberation Front, EPLF] and on the speedy delivery of relief aid to drought victims in northern Ethiopia, a statement was issued to that effect. In this respect, it should be recalled that the Ethiopian Government has taken additional steps on ways to resume the talks aimed at peacefully resolving the problem in Eritrea, and on ways to increase the relief aid to compatriot drought victims in that area. In this respect:

1. Regarding the participation of the UN as an observer, the Ethiopian Government at no time has objected to the participation of the UN in the substantive talks aimed at peacefully resolving the Eritrean issue. According to the procedural issues agreed upon, an invitation was extended through the chairman to all those governments and organizations who have been selected to serve as observers. The UN, which was among those to whom an invitation was extended through the chairman, stated that for its own legal reasons, it could not accept the invitation. The veracity of these statements can be judged from the documents compiled during the procedural talks.

Even so, the Ethiopian Government, due to its firm commitment to peace and in its willingness to resume the stalled peace talks, has taken additional steps to enable the UN to participate as an observer at the substantive talks, (?contrary) to the agreements reached in the earlier procedural talks. In a bid to implement its peace initiative, the Ethiopian Government has informed the two cochairmen/mediators of the current steps that it has taken.

2. Regarding the delivery of relief supplies, it is very well known that enough experience has been acquired from the steps taken in the past 15 years and from the recurrent drought. Hence, the government had made the necessary preparations to confront the current drought. Since the government was willing to transport the relief supplies, it has reached an agreement with religious organizations and donor institutions, and there was a plan to bring the aid through Mitsiwa port, and then to transport it by land to Asmera and other northern parts of the country, to reach our compatriots.

However, the self-styled Shabiyyah, a secessionist group, on 8 February launched an arrogant offensive on Mitsiwa, and the relief supplies which were intended to be transported through that port were disrupted. Even then, due to the government's commitment to transporting the relief supplies to compatriots as soon as possible, it looked for alternative routes. Assisted by international humanitarian communities, and through the joint efforts of the three religious organizations, the relief supplies managed to reach Tigray from Aseb Port, via Dese.

In addition, the necessary preparations have been finalized to transport the relief supplies from Aseb Port to Asmera town by plane, with the help of the UN and the international donor organizations.

The government has taken the following additional steps on ways and means of increasing relief aid supplies.

a. It has (?in principle) accepted the proposal that the port of Mitsiwa be used for relief aid and other goods and consumer commodities necessary for the people, and is ready to hold talks with donor organizations and other parties concerned with its implementation.

b. It has accepted with great satisfaction the agreement reached by the Soviet and U.S. Governments to coordinate their efforts to airlift relief supplies. This is being done through the initiative of the UN.

In conclusion, the Ethiopian Government extends its deepest appreciation and gratitude to all those who have provided humanitarian assistance to ethiopians afflicted by natural and man-made calamities. Inasmuch as the government is primarily responsible for any problems affecting citizens, it reiterates that it is ready to alleviate any problem faced by the people, to the best of its abilities.

Venda Lifts State of Emergency 5 June*MB0506170190 Johannesburg SAPA in English
1641 GMT 5 Jun 90*

[Text] Thohoyandou June 5 SAPA—The chairman of Venda's ruling Council of National Unity, Colonel Gabriel Ramushwana, has announced the immediate lifting of the state of emergency in the homeland. In a message broadcast over a local television channel on Tuesday [5 June] evening, Col Ramushwana said political prisoners would also be freed unconditionally as soon as administrative formalities had been completed.

He said mass rallies by "bona-fide political organisations" would only be allowed if organisers were granted permits. Col Ramushwana said political organisations would be held responsible for the maintenance of order during political rallies for which permits are granted. Existing security laws would be upheld by his government, he said.

Strikes by government employees, the burning of alleged witches, and destruction of property under any pretext would not be permitted.

UN Mission To Arrive in Country 9 June*MB0406064590 Johannesburg Domestic Service
in English 0500 GMT 5 Jun 90*

[Text] The secretary general of the United Nations, Dr. Perez de Cuellar, says a delegation of UN officials will arrive in South Africa on Saturday [9 June] for a 10-day visit to discuss, as he put it, the ending of apartheid. The group, which will be led by the under secretary general, Mr. (Abdullaïm Farar), will meet members of the government, political parties, movements, and other organizations, to gather information about the latest developments on the reform process. Proposals for hastening the end of apartheid will be discussed.

The minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Pik Botha, has said that the visit was a sequel to talks between the state president and Dr. Perez de Cuellar in Windhoek on 20 March, when the secretary general had expressed his interest in political developments in South Africa. It had then been agreed that a UN delegation would visit South Africa. Mr. Botha said the visit should be seen as a genuine effort by Dr. Perez de Cuellar to gain accurate information and not as an indication that the government was submitting to unsought intervention in South Africa's domestic affairs.

Mr. Botha said the government stood by its rejection of a draft resolution on South Africa before the General Assembly. He had no objection to the secretary general's being given the correct information, as long as this was not construed as cooperation by South Africa in the implementation of the resolution. He said South Africa viewed the resolution as being in conflict with the charter of the United Nations.

CP Condemns UN Delegation's Visit*MB0506194490 Johannesburg Domestic Service
in English 1900 GMT 5 Jun 90*

[Text] The Conservative Party [CP] says the visit to South Africa by a UN delegation starting on Saturday [9 June] will mark the beginning of international interference in South Africa's constitutional affairs and is a victory for the ANC [African National Congress].

The party spokesman on foreign affairs, Mr. Tom Langley, said in a statement that the UN delegation was coming to South Africa to monitor the implementation of the Harare declaration, which the UN accepted as a declaration on ending apartheid.

Mr. Langley said it was noteworthy that the leader of the delegation, Mr. Abdulrahim Farah, and another senior member were or had been connected to the UN Special Committee on Apartheid.

He said this indicated interference, in spite of the statement by the minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Pik Botha, who had said that the visit did not amount to interference in South Africa's domestic affairs.

5 June Press Review on Current Problems, Issues*MB0506102190*

[Editorial Report]

THE CITIZEN

White Insecurity About Government Reform Destination—"For a man who underwent a 'minor op,' Mr. Mandela has been taking an unusually long time to recover," remarks Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English on 1 June in its page 6 editorial. "Whatever the true state of his health, he will go on with his tour abroad, and he will seek to undo everything Mr. De Klerk was able to achieve in Europe." THE CITIZEN also warns that "instead of people being caught up in the spirit of reform, they are sick and tired of the violence and ANC [African National Congress] double talk, as well as the insecurity of not knowing where the government is taking them. Perhaps it is time the government reassessed its strategy. Too much emphasis is being placed on the ANC and on satisfying demands for the removal of obstacles."

Advantages To Lifting Emergency—The Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English on 4 June in its page 6 editorial refers to the possible lifting of the state of emergency, noting that there are the following advantages: "The emergency is regarded by the African National Congress as an obstacle to talks"; "It will be further evidence in Europe that the government really means business with its reforms"; and "Mr. De Klerk can maintain his initiative despite ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela's attempts to induce European and other leaders to continue sanctions." However, before

lifting the emergency it might be time for the government to "insist not just on peaceful negotiations (even here the ANC is dragging its feet), but an end to the 'armed struggle', so that the emergency can be ended over the whole country, instead of piecemeal, and we can go forward to negotiate the new South Africa in peace."

THE STAR

Bush To Get 'Bad Marks' From Congress on Summit—George Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev ended their meeting "talking like men who see themselves as a powerful team of global troubleshooters," notes Johannesburg THE STAR in English on 5 June in a page 12 editorial. "Before the summit, the U.S. had been expected to seek Russian acceptance of a unified Germany by 'sugaring the pill'. Mr. Gorbachev licked the sugar and refused the pill. And he left with Mr. Bush's signature on a trade agreement without making any concessions on the independence of the Baltic republics, something that could earn the American bad marks from Congress." Mr. Gorbachev went to Washington "not so much to solve the German problem as to reap a public relations triumph that could help enhance his tattered image at home. He may well have succeeded." THE STAR believes, therefore, "this 'summit' was not really a summit at all, in the sense of two superpowers getting together to decide the fortunes of other nations. Neither leader is powerful enough to make his writ run, in Europe or in the Baltic states. As other forces—a united Europe, one Germany, a resurgent Russia—and other leaders crowd onto the world stage, the Washington talks may come to be seen as the last of their kind, the closing of a chapter in post-war history."

Dhlomo Resignation 'Setback'—A second editorial on the same page claims Dr. Oscar Dhlomo's resignation as secretary general of Inkatha and the kwaZulu cabinet is "a severe setback for Chief Minister Buthelesi." "Though staunchly loyal to his leader in public and private, Dr. Dhlomo has given signs of unhappiness at actions and policies he had to defend. Mild-mannered and conciliatory, he found himself increasingly compromised, his efforts to negotiate with the UDF COSATU [United Democratic Front/Congress of South African Trade Unions] alliance in Natal thwarted by the militancy of those around him. While his sudden resignation is a shock, it is no great surprise."

CAPE TIMES

Mandela To Chase Away White De Klerk Support—"Even allowing for Nelson Mandela's need to play to his own constituency, the ANC leader is blowing up an unhelpful storm in the very climate for fundamental reforms he claims to support," observes a page 8 editorial in Cape Town CAPE TIMES in English on 29 May. "In response to F.W. de Klerk's triumphant European

tour, he has announced his determination to undo whatever good the South African president has achieved, promising that 'after I have spoken there he will regret his visit to Europe'." But "by setting out to turn the international community against Mr. De Klerk, Mr. Mandela could be chasing away the very white support he says he wants Mr. De Klerk to have."

RAPPORT

Right Wing Violence To Ruin Afrikaner Interests—"Right-wing violence is no longer limited to overheated rhetoric," warns a page 10 editorial in Johannesburg RAPPORT in Afrikaans on 3 June. "People in responsible circles have already expressed the fear that more 'White Wolf' incidents, even assassinations on white political leaders, can occur in this climate." "What is so tragic about these same speakers who regularly preach violence, is that they obviously do not have a clear political plan for the future. Maintaining the status quo is no longer politically practical, because it can eventually drive the country, and Afrikaner interests, to ruin." RAPPORT's "objection" against right-wing inciters of violence is that they "use violence like a child uses his fists to make a point if it is unable to do so with his intelligence." The Afrikaner can "achieve more through negotiation than through violence."

THE NAMIBIAN

Criticism of DTA Cabinet Formation—Editor Gwen Lister writes in her "Political Perspective" column on page 6 of Windhoek THE NAMIBIAN in English on 1 June the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance (DTA) "is not very good at government, but it seems to enjoy forming cabinets and shadow cabinets." With its latest shadow cabinet it "certainly made some strange choices, although we note that some of their 'ethnic' leaders have been completely left out in the cold and former DTA President Kuaimo Riruako, doesn't figure at all." "The DTA's announcement of a shadow cabinet also indicates the predicament they presently find themselves in: how to be an effective opposition when they couldn't function as an effective government?"

THE TIMES OF NAMIBIA

Special Advisors Bill 'Disquieting'—Windhoek TIMES OF NAMIBIA in English on 31 May in its page 2 editorial says the Special Advisors Bill is "a most disquieting piece of legislation, as a preview of a future administrative structure, and in its unanswered financial implications. But, above all, it is disquieting as an ill-concealed attempt by the SWAPO [South-West African People's Organization] government to frustrate constitutional requirements." A cabinet functions as the advisors to an executive president so "why would the president be in need of his own special advisors?" "Why would the Cabinet be in need of special advisors, when it can draw from a civil service?"

Angola

* UNITA Urged To Be More Understanding

90AF0088B Lisbon DIARIO DE NOTICIAS
in Portuguese 13 Apr 90 p 43

[Commentary by Jose Antonio Santos]

[Text] In announcing that it is prepared to recognize the Angolan state on the basis of the Alvor Accords, UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] has once again provided evidence of its inclination toward error.

To speak the truth, even with this statement of desire, one still cannot understand the real intent of Savimbi's movement.

Is it to recognize the Angolan state on the basis of the Alvor Accords? How can this be, since in 1975, when Agostinho Neto, Holden Roberto, and Jonas Savimbi met in the Algarve, the Angolan state did not even exist yet?

Does recognizing the Angolan state on the basis of this document, which dates back 15 years in time, revive the FNLA [Angoland National Liberation Front] and bring the movements of that time together again at the zero point? This does not seem likely either, particularly since UNITA itself says this in its most recent statement, in which it claims to be ready to "assume the responsibility of respecting all of the agreements concluded during the last 15 years by the MPLA [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola] government."

Obviously, Jonas Savimbi's movement is seeking to correct the effect of the error, by imposing a slight inflection, when it says that these commitments will be respected after the holding of "free and just elections which can be verified by an international body."

Obviously, at this point, what the international public demands, what the lovers of peace want, and what the people of Angola yearn for is for UNITA to make a clear statement about the nine points in the peace plan proposed by Jose Eduardo dos Santos, which was made known through the intermediary of U.S. Secretary of State James Baker.

It would be good to know, for example, what UNITA is thinking not only about each of these points which have been proposed to it, but also about the spirit of openness shown by the MPLA, of which, at least seemingly, this plan is the repository. Put in another way, the time has now come for understanding the thinking of UNITA about the developments between the frustration of the Gbadolite agreements and the proposals which have now been submitted to it by the MPLA. But on the contrary, instead of making an objective statement about the proposals, UNITA prefers the cult of ambiguity.

And so on the first point in the plan put forth by Jose Eduardo dos Santos—"recognition of the state and the legitimacy of the Angolan Government"—the UNITA

has slowly acknowledged that it is prepared to recognize the Angolan state on the basis of the 1975 Alvor Accords.

Since UNITA would obviously lack credibility if it agreed to recognize things which do not exist, it will readily be understood that this gesture was merely designed to gain time, with a view to recovering the ground and the influence it has lost.

The fact is that UNITA knows as well as any self-respecting Angolan that with the MPLA, it will be possible to negotiate anything with a view to achieving peace, provided that the first point in the plan put forth by Jose Eduardo dos Santos, i.e., "recognition of the state and the legitimacy of the Angolan Government," is accepted. To seek to negotiate this point with the MPLA could only be seen as obvious obstruction of the building of peace itself.

In fact, history undertook of itself to revoke the Alvor Agreements, a revocation confirmed by practically all of the countries in the world which have recognized the government in Luanda. Only three have failed to take this step—the United States, South Africa, and Israel.

It can be seen, therefore, that many of the countries which are traditional friends and supporters of UNITA recognize the current composition of the government and state of Angola. They are given legitimacy, moreover, by their participation in the leading world forums, specifically the UN and the OAU [Organization of African Unity].

To attempt to reject this evidence is to deny the possibility of achieving peace.

Thus, among the other points proposed by Jose Eduardo dos Santos, it would be interesting if UNITA would explain its contributions to the way in which preparations should be made for the free elections, and the method of integrating all of the military in a single national army. The fact is that there may be many parties, but when it comes to armies, it seems advisable to have just one.

At a time when the world is moving toward the establishment of a consensus on the conditions needed for a harmonious life and peace, and knowing, as we do know, that in this connection, concessions by all the parties are important, what is expected of the leaders of UNITA is that they too will have the courage to be able to fulfill the plan the Angolan nation is imposing on them—achieving peace.

The same can be said about the MPLA and the government in Luanda, although the efforts pursued by Jose Eduardo dos Santos to find a peaceful solution are recognized.

With the methods of African mediation exhausted, it is time for the MPLA and UNITA to talk directly, without the intervention of partners who make this very dialogue difficult.

This time, we believe, they will be close.

The more so to the extent that both the parties are capable, while not abandoning the essential, of showing willingness to compromise to the benefit of Angola. In the grandeur of this process of reconciliation, there will be neither victors nor vanquished. Or more accurately, the Angolan people alone will be the winners.

But in order for this to come about, UNITA will have to give evidence of greater understanding, and Savimbi will have to accept the fact that Jose Eduardo dos Santos cannot "offer" him the Futungo de Belas before free elections are held.

Botswana

Mandela Addresses Newsmen, Departs for Europe

MB0506191590 Gaborone Domestic Service in English
1610 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] The deputy leader of the African National Congress [ANC], Mr. Nelson Mandela, has said that he has been struck by the gentleness and discipline of Botswana. He said since his release from prison he has almost been killed by people with love in every place he visited.

Addressing a press conference in the studios of Radio Botswana this afternoon, Mr. Mandela expressed his admiration of the economic prosperity of Botswana. He said Botswana, unlike other African countries, had been able to overcome the legacies of poverty, ignorance, and illiteracy.

He said Botswana was one of the few states in Africa with a flourishing economy and a high growth rate that ensures a future with better living standards for its people.

Mr. Mandela and his delegation leave for Europe today to spell out plans for peace and prosperity for a democratic South Africa, as outlined by the ANC.

He said he was going to Europe, where democracy is based on a bill of rights which protects everybody and does not deal with guarantees for minorities. He said if this system of one man, one vote without minority

protection was good enough for Europe, why was it not good enough for South Africa.

Mr. Mandela would not talk about his latest talks with the South African president, Mr. F.W. de Klerk. He said the message he was taking to Europe emanates from talks he has had with African leaders that sanctions must be maintained.

He said this view was not only the view of the ANC but was the view of the international community, because sanctions were introduced to bring about the downfall of apartheid, which he said is still in place.

Mr. Mandela said he was optimistic about talks for a negotiated settlement in South Africa. He said he still hoped that the state of emergency will be lifted. He said the lifting of the state of emergency, whether it is done today, will not affect his journey to Europe. He said it will be welcomed not in the spirit of it being a victory for the ANC but for the people of South Africa and the world as a whole.

Mr. Mandela said he was optimistic that all obstacles to a negotiated settlement in South Africa will be removed, although he said he was aware there were still difficult areas to (?solve). He said the success so far achieved has given the ANC confidence that it will be able to address all other obstacles.

The ANC deputy leader said he had confidence in President de Klerk as a man who wants to take a positive stand to ensure that good progress is made in the search for a peaceful solution in South Africa.

Mr. Mandela and Mrs. Mandela left Gaborone a short while ago for Europe at the end of their two-day state visit to Botswana.

Madagascar

* 'Parallel' Market Said Thriving in Capital

34000665 London AFRICA ANALYSIS
in English 27 Apr 90 p 12

[Text]

CURRENCY CHECKLIST

SELECTED COUNTRIES (to £ and US\$)	OFFICIAL		PARALLEL	
	£	\$	£	\$
Algeria dinar	13.08	7.99	65.00	42.00
Angola kwanza	49.84	29.91	4,000.00	2,500.00
Botswana pula	3.10	1.89	—	—
Burundi franc	293.75	179.49	400.00	250.00
Cote d'Ivoire CFA franc	466.00	284.75	n/a	360.00
Djibouti franc	285.00	174.15	—	—
Egypt pound	4.36	2.66	4.95	3.00
Ethiopia birr	3.36	2.05	7.00	5.20
Gambia dalasi	13.61	8.31	n/a	n/a

CURRENCY CHECKLIST (Continued)

SELECTED COUNTRIES (to £ and US\$)	OFFICIAL		PARALLEL	
	£	\$	£	\$
Ghana cedi*	515.49	315.00	570.00	330.00
Kenya shilling	37.59	23.03	40.00	27.00
Liberia dollar	1.23	1.00	4.50	3.00
Libya dinar	0.48	0.29	1.40	1.00
Madagascar franc	2,070.75	1,265.75	2,880.00	1,800.00
Malawi kwacha	4.69	2.87	7.00	4.50
Mauritius rupee	24.73	15.11	—	—
Morocco dirham	13.02	7.95	—	—
Mozambique metical	1,506.13	920.33	3,500.00	1,750.00
Nigeria naira	12.92	7.94	15.60	9.40
Seychelles rupee	10.00	6.11	12.00	7.00
Sierra Leone leone	193.05	117.96	250.00	155.00
Somalia shilling	670.47	409.69	2,800.00	1,800.00
South Africa rand*	4.34	2.65	—	—
Sudan pound	18.72	11.44	42.00	25.00
Tanzania shilling	315.90	193.03	500.00	320.00
Tunisia dinar	1.48	0.90	1.95	1.40
Uganda shilling	623.03	380.70	1,030.00	640.00
Zaire zaire	868.95	530.98	955.85	584.00
Zambia kwacha*	64.45	39.58	100.00	65.00
Zimbabwe dollar	3.06	2.42	10.00	5.00

n/a not available, * second tier, —no parallel market

Notes: Because of shortages, soft drinks are now more popular than beer in the Angolan parallel market. A crate of beer bought at \$13 in hard currency shops can sell for Kwz1800 (\$62 at the official rate of exchange).

Mauritius is to abolish exchange controls by next March. This month a second-tier market on the Port Louis Stock Exchange was launched.

The Tanzania central bank announced on 29 March the official takeover of gold trading, in an attempt to stop gold being smuggled abroad. The central bank prices for gold now compete with those on the parallel market.

The central bank of Nigeria sold \$711m on the foreign exchange market during the first quarter of 1990. The amount is 28 percent of the \$2.5bn allocated for sale on the market this year.

For the past three months Zambia registered a 122 percent inflation rate. A small loaf of bread now costs K36; 10 eggs sell at K48; and in the Savoy Hotel in Ndola, baked beans on a slice of toast cost K90.

There is growing concern in government circles in South Africa about the amount of currency being 'round-tripped' through Pretoria's two-tier system. The financial rand rate is

some seven to one against the pound while the commercial rand rate is a little over R4 to the pound.

All the figures are from the best available sources: the parallel rates are listed for guidance on the state of national economies, and subscribers to AFRICA ANALYSIS are reminded of the risks involved in illegal currency dealings.

Where Milk and Gold Compete

Antananarivo—The parallel market is thriving here in Madagascar's capital, despite the government's concerted efforts to crack down on all illegal dealings.

Curiously enough, the island has no income tax system. But its highly punitive customs duty tariff and sales tax, and thorough control of all imports and checks on passenger baggage in ports and airports, have not been enough to deter illegal parallel market trading and hoarding.

Recently, it was discovered that local export industries have been exporting their products illegally, by-passing the customs. Foreigners, too, and especially South Africans, are accustomed to this practice, saving them from export levies.

But many Malagasy businessmen are also involved in the illegal transfer of funds abroad. They are wary of putting their money in the banks, although the newly revitalised

and privatised institutions should restore their confidence. But their fear is a result of the government's previous record of seizing, freezing or borrowing depositors' money in the banks.

The illegal transfers are made under cover of over-invoicing, in contrast with other habits of under-invoicing by foreigners (to escape import duties).

Contraband is also flourishing, and with the recent economic transformation process under way, smuggling has increased, with local capitalists contracting poorer Malagasy people to bring in undeclared goods from nearby Mauritius and Reunion. In addition, the contraband chiefs make sure that their contacts in the customs turn a blind eye. Goods, such as milk, cheese, soap and kitchenwares, are sold at exorbitant prices here in Antananarivo and other provinces.

After the brief disappearance of Gauloise cigarettes from shops, Nestle milk is now in short supply, available in the parallel market at 1800Mgfr against the official price of 10,000Mgfr a pound. Gold, another cherished commodity, is sold at 25,000Mgfr on the parallel market. The official price is 10,000Mgfr.

Mauritius

* PPP Created; Party Platform Discussed

90AF0158A Port Louis WEEK-END in French
29 Apr 90 p 6

[Article: "Mr Raj Virahsawmy Launches the People's Homeland Party (PPP)"; first paragraph is introduction]

[Text] *The party will campaign to extend the "Best Losers" system, reinstate the MPL [Muslim Personal Law], and fight against abortion.*

The PPP [expansion unknown], the new political formation created on the initiative of the independent deputy Mr. Raj Virahsawmy, will be officially launched next Tuesday, 1 May, at 1000 at the Mary, Queen of Peace community center in Port Louis. On the occasion of the launching of this party, whose other leaders include Maulana Haroon Hassen and the union leader Mr. Auguste Follet, prayers will be said, in particular by Father Henri Souchon, Maulana Haroon Hassen, Pandit Sriksissoon, Ayer Palaneeandy, and Pandit Uppiah.

The first plank of its platform, the PPP announced, will be the need to amend the Constitution in order to recognize the following communities: Tamul-Mauritians, Telugu-Mauritians, Marathi-Mauritians, half-breed Mauritians, Afro-Mauritians and French-Mauritians and colored people.

In the same breath, the party suggests giving four additional public holidays, in particular for Tamizé Puttandu (Tamul New Year), Yaum-Un-Nabi (birth of the Prophet), the anniversary of the Blessed Father Laval's death, and Arya Sanaj Stapna Divas (the day of creation of Arya Samaj).

The PPP will also militate for the extension of the "Best Losers" system to the Tamuls, Telegus, and Marathis, and for the reinstatement of the Muslim Personal Law in the Code of marriage. In addition, the party intends to fight any practice or bill that would promote abortion.

As far as the economy is concerned, the PPP demands a reorientation in favor of the service sector (import-export, offshore transshipment, duty-free port, etc.). The party, which believes we are on the verge of economic bankruptcy, is of the opinion that uncontrolled "free enterprise" is to blame.

In conclusion, the PPP believes that Mauritius can be saved only if the people can express themselves and cease to fear. And it insists on the need for a third force, "disciplined, clean, generous and sensitive to sacrifices."

* Future Site for Oil Refinery Considered

90AF0158B Port Louis LE MAURICIEN in French
2 May 90 pp 1, 12

[Article: "Oil Refinery: Site Visit to Agalega by Ministerial Delegation on 9 May"]

[Text] On Wednesday 9 May, the prime minister, Sir Anerood Jugnauth, will lead a ministerial delegation to Agalega for a site visit. In government circles, people hint at a connection between this visit and the possible construction of the oil refinery, which has been talked about so much in recent months. The ministers most closely involved, Clarel Malherbe (Industry and Applied Technology) and Sir Ramesh Jeewoolall (Land and Housing), as well as technicians, will accompany the chief of state.

The ministerial delegation that will go to Agalega will, in a first stage, essentially consider the question of the landing strip that must be lengthened to make it easier to unload on the island the equipment required to build the oil refinery, should the project succeed. People at the Ministry of Industry and Applied Technology are reluctant to comment at this stage, as a site inspection is essential before any decision can be made. Besides, answering a question in parliament recently, the minister of industry, Mr. Malherbe, was reluctant to discuss the subject. [text missing] Earlier this year, LE MAURICIEN had already announced that the government was increasingly in favor of building an oil refinery in Agalega.

According to our information, the refinery project is on the right track as the dossier seems to be quite complete at this stage, and there is a distinct possibility that minister Malherbe will meet the Arab promoters in the not too distant future. According to our information, construction of the refinery would not take much time, as Saudi authorities merely intend to move equipment from Abu Dhabi and set it up again in the island selected.

By the end of May, the experts and technicians working on the project will be in a position to present a first report on the Agalega site.

Zambia*** Force Ruled Out in UNIP Recruiting Drive**

34000657A Lusaka TIMES OF ZAMBIA in English
19 Apr 90 p 7

[Excerpt] Party cadres have been warned against forcing people to buy UNIP [United National Independence Party] cards before boarding public transport as such members were not "genuine".

Lusaka Province Member of Central Committee Cde Bautis Kapulu said at the opening of the first provincial council meeting yesterday that such people bought the cards only as a means to board buses, trains or enter the markets.

"Organizers should desist from this type of recruitment of new members as such members are not genuine," he said.

Cde Kapulu reviewed the Party's recruitment programme in which Lusaka Urban recorded the highest figures this year compared to the first quarter of 1989.

He said membership figures should match those of the fast growing population in the capital. It was important to recruit new members as well as retain the old ones.

The Party recruited 51,501 members in Lusaka Urban, Rural and Luangwa compared to 10,122 in 1989. The Women's League in the same areas recruited 6,381 compared to 2,815 last year.

The Youth League has 7,382 new members as compared to 2,586 recruited last year.

Cde Kapulu announced that this year's Party elections registration of voters beat that of 1987.

Out of 197,970 members 95,168 registered compared to only 58,309 registered. In Lusaka Rural in 1987, 21,223 registered and this figure had risen to 24,594 this year.

"The Province had increased both membership and voting power by 41,204.

Cde Kapulu further urged district leadership to strictly supervise the forthcoming elections.

Ivory Coast

Party Urges Houphouet To End Meetings With Groups

AB3105135690 Abidjan Domestic Service in French
1245 GMT 31 May 90

[“Important” communique issued on 31 May by the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast following its meeting on 30 May in Abidjan]

[Text] At the request of its president, his Excellency Felix Houphouet-Boigny, the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of Ivory Coast-African Democratic Rally held a meeting extended to members of government on Wednesday, 30 May 1990, at the president's private residence in Cocody district. During the meeting, President Felix Houphouet-Boigny, the members of the Political Bureau, and the government discussed the general political situation of the country. The Political Bureau expressed satisfaction with the efforts made by the party chairman to find appropriate solutions for our country's current difficulties.

In this regard, the Political Bureau extended special congratulations to the interministerial coordinating committee on the stabilization and economic revival program and to its chairman, Governor Alassane Ouattara, for the work they did in such a short time and which has been endorsed by the international community. Since the program has already been presented to, and adopted by the National Assembly, the Political Bureau called on the government to take every appropriate measure for its immediate and rigorous implementation, as it is vital for our country to meet its commitments.

The Political Bureau paid tribute to the president for the patience he displayed in readily receiving the various socioprofessional groups to examine their grievances. In view of the current financial situation, the government unfortunately cannot incur other expenses, as this would seriously and definitively jeopardize the recovery policy which has been so courageously initiated. The Political Bureau has therefore appealed to the president of the republic to kindly put an end to such audiences after receiving the six groups already announced, so that all citizens may go back to work in order and discipline.

Last, the Political Bureau examined the problems resulting from the closure of schools and faculties and expressed satisfaction with the efforts made so far to ensure the reopening of these institutions. It called on the government to pursue efforts to create conducive conditions for the resumption of classes. The Political Bureau urgently appealed to parents, teachers, and students to join the government in the efforts to save the school and academic year. The Political Bureau, thereby, confirmed that the academic year will not be invalid.

Government Authorizes Nine Political Parties

AB3105220490 Abidjan Domestic Service in French
1930 GMT 31 May 90

[Excerpt] The Council of Ministers, which met in Abidjan on 30 May 1990 under the chairmanship of the head of state, President Felix Houphouet-Boigny, heard a report by the minister of interior concerning the political parties that have submitted their registration papers to the competent authorities in conformity with Article 7 of the Constitution and the provisions of Law No. 60-315 of 21 September 1960 relating to associations. The Council of Ministers took note and authorized the signing of the certificates of registration to be handed over to the following nine political parties listed according to the dates of submission of their papers: the Ivorian Popular Front, the Republic Party of Ivory Coast, the Ivorian Workers' Party, the Social Democrats Union, the Ivorian Socialist Party, the Party for Development in Solidarity, the National Socialist Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the Popular Unity Party. [passage omitted]

Comment on Wait for Recognition

AB2305213090 Abidjan FRATERNITE MATIN
in French 21 May 90 p 5

[“Commentary” by Alfred Dan Moussa: “The Multiparty System: Seven Political Entities Are Waiting Authorization”]

[Excerpts] The multiparty system. Since 30 April, everything seems to suggest that the political and administrative authorities want to go very fast on the path to effective implementation of political pluralism in Ivory Coast.

Otherwise, how does one explain the news conferences by political associations without receiving authorization to act as political parties or, at least, authorization to carry on activities outside the stipulated period. Article 9 of the Associations Act stipulates that “for a period of two months from the date of filing its statement, the association shall not engage in any activity....” In other words, any activity is permitted starting the first day of the third month following the date of filing an application for recognition.

Events point to the authorities' wanting to give concrete meaning to the multiparty concept. Otherwise, how does one explain the supporters or militants of this or that party combing, so it seems, the various regions of the country and the various districts of Abidjan to inform the people of their party's existence and, in some cases, to set up grassroots committees? [passage omitted]

According to an observer of an opposing political camp, the leadership of certain parties have not hesitated to purchase motorcycles for a number of unemployed youths who have left school, in order to attract attention to themselves and achieve their objective.

But the conduct of these tours also shows that the various opposition leaders are aware of the head of state's determination to make party politics a reality. This was demonstrated by the Cabinet meeting of 3 May, the communique of which stressed the willingness of the head of state to change from the single party to the multiparty system. "Regarding the recommendation of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Party of the Ivory Coast-African Democratic Rally on the multiparty system, the head of state, president of the republic, custodian of the Constitution, accepted the recommendation and instructed the minister of interior, in accordance with the law, to take the necessary steps for the implementation of Article 7 of the Constitution".

On that score, I have no comment to make, except to note that one month prior to the abovementioned cabinet meeting, Laurent Gbagbo's Ivorian Popular Front (FPI) filed its application for recognition at the Abidjan Prefecture. That was on 2 April, to be precise. The FPI was followed in its action on 10 April by the Ivory Coast Republican Party of Gbai Tagro Robert (please do not confuse him with Mr. Bai Tagro Albert, a member of the PDCI Political Bureau still faithful to his party). It is worth noting here that the Republican Party's first application for recognition dates back to the 1970's.

Bernard Zadi Zaourou's Union of Social Democrats indicated its decision to exist and operate officially on 23 April. So far, seven political parties await recognition. Among these are Francis Wodie's Ivorian Labor Party, Kouakou Mandouadja's Ivorian Socialist Party, Yapi Beda's Socialist National Party, whose application for recognition, preceded by that of Mariko Youssouf's Solidary Development Party, was registered on 7 May. Since then, two parties have been announced and will surely file their applications for recognition by the end of May. [passage omitted]

The regulations give two months to examine an application. [passage omitted]

In other words, Laurent Gbagbo's FPI will undoubtedly be one of the first political formations to receive or be refused authorization to function. And this authorization, in the form of a receipt, could come on 2 June; that is, two months after the application was filed at the Abidjan Prefecture.

As we wait for 2 June, if information received from certain informed sources is reliable, this deadline is most likely to be met. [passage omitted]

Liberia

Guerrillas 16 km From Monrovia, 'Ready To Attack'

Samuel Doe 'Prepares To Flee'

PA0506134590 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1128 GMT
5 Jun 90

[Text] Abidjan, 5 Jun (EFE)—According to radio stations monitored today in Abidjan, the capital of Liberia is very

tense following the announcement that Charles Taylor's guerrillas are 16 km from Monrovia, ready to attack the city, while President Samuel Doe prepares to flee.

The sources say that the airport in Monrovia has been completely taken over by the guerrillas of the National Patriotic Front and is closed to traffic.

Most of the Western foreigners have been evacuated; only a few U.S. officers without dependents and representatives of the diplomatic corps remain.

Six warships, with approximately 2,000 U.S. Marines on board, are anchored about 20 km off the Liberian coast, although the U.S. Embassy in Monrovia has announced it will not intervene to support Doe despite the Liberian president's call to the international community for help.

According to the French ambassador in Liberia, who confirmed that the guerrillas are at the entrance of the city, Monrovia is alarmed and several thousand Liberians—including some ministers—have fled the capital by sea, fearing a bloodbath.

Meanwhile, several dozen of Doe's personal bodyguards have deserted their posts, fearing attacks by the National Patriotic Front and the virtual overthrow of the regime of President Samuel Doe.

The Liberian defense minister warned troops yesterday that any soldier who quits his post will be considered a deserter.

According to some sources, Doe is seeking an escape from the country before the guerrillas arrive, after several ranking government officials suggested the possibility that he resign.

The incidents in Liberia began last December when Taylor, former minister under Doe, attempted to stage a coup d'etat. After his failure, Taylor retreated to Nimba Province along the border with the Ivory Coast, from where he has been moving toward the doors of the capital.

Taylor accuses Doe of corruption and wants to capture him alive to take him before the people's court.

Government Asks U.S. Intervention

PA0506145990 Havana International Service
in Spanish 1400 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] The government of Liberian President Samuel Doe has requested U.S. intervention, after rebels captured an Army facility and a U.S. rubber plantation in Monrovia, capital of the African country. Last-minute news dispatches report that the Liberian president is protected in his mansion in the capital by 1,000 troops trained by Israel, fearing the course that developments may take.

Press reports previously indicated that the guerrilla National Patriotic Front has completely encircled the international airport of Monrovia. This prompted commercial airlines to cancel their flights for the remainder of the week.

Liberian Army Military Commander (Henry Duval) expressed the hope that the United States will intervene in view of the course of developments.

About 2,000 U.S. Marines have been positioned off the coast of Liberia since last week for the purpose of evacuating U.S. citizens who reside in that African country.

Rebels Take Firestone Plantation

AB0506192590 London BBC World Service in English
1709 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] Liberian rebels have carried out their threat to attack the Firestone rubber estate, the largest in the world. The plantation is about 35 miles from the Liberian capital, and it is all-important to the economy, employing some 8,000 workers, and the rebels seem to have made a major advance. On the line to Monrovia, Robin White asked Elizabeth Blunt what happened:

[Begin recording] [Blunt] Well, the rebels, we knew, were just on the other side of the Farmington River, which marks the estate's eastern boundary. We knew they were at Owensgrove and had been there since Sunday night, Monday morning. This morning, people in the area apparently heard small arms fire from that direction, and then what was described as a substantial number of men came across the river, and, as they stated, basically overran the Firestone estate, including the central area which has the company's offices, the rubber factory, and what there is of [word indistinct] the clinic and motor parks of the inhabited central area of the Firestone estate.

[White] Now, presumably there were government troops there. Did they not fight back?

[Blunt] Well, there were not very many. There is a report of a skirmish at the checkpoint at the main entry to the estate as you come from Monrovia, but that only apparently involved a very few—15 or 20—soldiers. They say they seem to have taken it over initially pretty well unopposed, but the last person I talked to down there said that Army reinforcements appear to be coming up, and they were obviously—they are civilians—quite frightened, because once the Army arrives and tries to take it back, then there will be serious fighting and much more danger that the civilians will get hurt.

[White] Is it not rather surprising that there were not thousands and thousands of government troops there? I mean, they must have known that the rebels will try and take it.

[Blunt] There are not perhaps thousands and thousands. We are talking about a small country, a small army, and, finally, a small war. We are talking, at the most, in terms of a couple of hundred troops, even for a heavy concentration. But from what we gather, most of the troops left that area after the firing around Owensgrove on Sunday night.

[White] So the Army, it seems, is just giving up?

[Blunt] Well, at least it perhaps is having a go at taking it back now, but initially I do not think the rebels met much resistance when they overran the plantation this morning.

[White] Are there any moves going on at all from the government to try and negotiate an end to this war?

[Blunt] It does seem that finally something is moving, and it is moving with the help of the religious leaders. The Christian churches—all the Christian churches of Liberia—and the National Muslim Council are working together. These religious leaders met the president last week. They then went to the Senate and talked to the senators, who asked them if they would help, and they had another meeting with President Doe at the mansion this morning. And this really looks like the most hopeful approach. One problem, of course, is getting in touch with the rebels. I have heard suggestions that perhaps several delegations could go, perhaps, to the United States, perhaps to Ivory Coast. Members of the group are being very discreet so far. We may know more later today about the approach that is being tried. But they say they are willing to do anything they can to bring peace, and they obviously would be a good channel in which to start talks. [end recording]

Ministry Denies Firestone Taken

AB0506204990 Paris AFP in English 2021 GMT
5 Jun 90

[Text] Monrovia, June 5 (AFP)—Government troops fighting rebels seeking to unseat Liberian President Samuel Doe killed rebel military adviser Elma Glee Johnson, in renewed fighting Monday in Grand Bassa County, the Information Ministry said late Tuesday. Mr. Johnson was killed at the Liberian Agriculture Corporation (LAC), several miles (kilometers) from Buchanan, the county's capital, it said. No other details of the fighting were given.

However an AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE reporter in Buchanan said Tuesday he had spoken to a National Patriotic Front (NPFL) rebel military adviser named as Elmer Johnson after Monday's battles.

In a related development, the ministry told Monrovia residents to ignore anonymous letters written by "criminal-minded" people posing as rebels telling people to leave their homes. The ministry warned that those writing such letters would be punished. It also denied reports that rebels had taken over the Firestone plantation company less than one mile (about two kilometers) from Roberts International Airport.

Rebel 'Ringleader' Killed

AB0506212590 Monrovia Radio ELWA in English
2000 GMT 5 Jun 90

[Text] The Government of Liberia has announced that its troops have killed one of the ringleaders of the rebel forces, Mr. Elmer Glee Johnson, in renewed fighting in Grand Bassa County. A government statement quoted by the national radio said Johnson, a military adviser to

the rebel leadership, was killed yesterday in the confines of the Liberia Agricultural Company, LAC, near Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, during renewed fighting between government troops and rebels. There has been no independent confirmation of this government claim.

Firestone 'Easily Won' by Rebels

AB0606101090 London BBC World Service in English
0730 GMT 6 Jun 90

[From the "Network Africa" program]

[Text] At lunch time yesterday news came through that Charles Taylor's rebel forces had overrun the huge Firestone rubber plantation, some 30 miles from the capital, Monrovia. Firestone was the last remaining major center of economic activity still working in that country. But apparently we heard that Liberian Government forces were making strenuous efforts to retake the complex.

Firestone is owned by the Japanese. It is the largest single rubber plantation in the world and the biggest employer in Liberia, with over 8,000 workers. It is not too far from Robertsfield International Airport. Gerald Burke has been reporting on developments in Liberia's civil war. He came on the line from Monrovia, the capital, and Marco Worman talks to him.

[Begin recording] [Worman] Jerry, tell me first of all what took place yesterday out there on the Firestone Plantations?

[Burke] Well, I gather that the rebels attacked the plantation. They have been in the environs for quite some days now. There was a small group of government troops guarding the plantation, which I gather, were quickly overrun by quite a substantial consignment of rebels. The government soldiers put up little resistance. The rebels were heavily armed, and the battle was easily won.

[Worman] Why do you think the government soldiers put up such small resistance?

[Burke] Well, that has been the trend for several months since the invasion began in the north of the country at the end of last year. The government soldiers fear to be heavily depleted in numbers and are considerably demoralized by the rebel advances. So it is basically more of the same of what we have been seeing over the past few months.

[Worman] Jerry, how important a milestone is the Firestone property for Charles Taylor's rebels on their march to Monrovia? Would you say this is the beginning of the end?

[Burke] Well, the beginning of the end took place quite some time ago, I think, and that is the feeling very much here in Monrovia. The plantation is 90,000 acres spread between Buchanan, which is a rebel stronghold, and the capital. It has been a fairly crucial source of revenue for the government. Of course, the government has been

hard hit by the standstill in exports of iron ore and timber, both of which have been pretty significant foreign exchange earners in the past, but the export of these two commodities have been at a standstill as a result of the war for a few weeks now.

[Worman] Apparently President Doe is caught up at the Executive Mansion and very few ministers are allegedly still in Monrovia. What other signs are there that the Doe regime is completely out of order?

[Burke] Apparently a number of religious leaders went to see President Doe yesterday afternoon at the Executive Mansion. I gather they were trying to achieve some kind of an 11th-hour compromise that would lead to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. Church leaders coming out of the meeting were very tight-lipped. They refused to say what the outcome was, but they did concede that there has been no further meetings fixed with the president. [end recording]

Teachers Ask Closure of Schools

AB0506134590 Paris AFP in French 1254 GMT
5 Jun 90

[Text] Monrovia, 5 Jun (AFP)—The National Teachers Association of Liberia (NTAL) today called on the Ministry of Education to temporarily close all schools in the country, while rebels opposed to President Doe's regime were reportedly on the outskirts of the capital. In a letter to Education Minister Othello Gonga, the NTAL pointed out that "the continued operation of schools in this period of national crisis is absurd." All religious schools and certain private schools suspended classes last week because they feared a rebel attack against Monrovia.

According to eyewitness accounts, rebels of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor, a former senior civil servant, are reportedly progressing toward Monrovia on two fronts, some 50 km from the capital.

The Ministry of Education, however, has maintained the operation of Monrovia institutions of learning, which have over 10,000 in the primary, high school, and university students. Classes are being reduced in order to enable the students to get home earlier than usual.

In their letter, the teachers denounced the "total disorder" in which the recent events have plunged the education system, especially in Nimba County (northeast), where rebel activities started on 24 December 1989, and in Grand Bassa County in the center. They further pointed out that teachers in the Loffa County (north) and Grand Cape Mount County (northwest) are living "in fear and uncertainty."

Today, the situation seemed calm in Monrovia despite a five-week-old fuel shortage which has disrupted road transport.

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DATE FILMED

6 June 1990

